Disaffected Youth. Systematic Review

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Active Inclusion Learning Network
Systematic Review

Disaffected Youth

A. Context

This systematic review is a part of a wider project dedicated to the active inclusion of vulnerable groups. The project is implemented by the Active Inclusion Learning Network which is an European Social Fund transnational network involving countries such as: Belgium, Germany, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Sweden and the United Kingdom. The management of the network is ensured by the National Offender Management Service (UK). The aim of the Active Inclusion Learning Network is to support individuals in vulnerable groups, including Troubled Families, Disaffected Youth, and those who are Marginalised in Community to (re-)engage with the labour market.

The purpose of this systematic review is to inform and support the selection of best practices across Europe in the field of employability and employment of vulnerable groups. In practical terms, this review will provide 'hard' evidence on what works in this area, thus guiding the selection and analysis of the best practices. In the process of selecting and analysing the best practices, the network also uses a pan-European survey, interviews (using appreciative inquiry approach) and peer review platforms.

As detailed by the project partners, the particular vulnerable groups that are in the focus of this systematic review are:

1. Disaffected Youth:
- **Disaffected youth inclusion and empowerment**
- **Disaffected youth employment, education and training**

2. Marginalized in community
- Homelessness
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Offenders / Ex-offenders
- Mental health, physical and learning disabilities

3. Troubled families
   Offenders' families
   Multigenerational unemployment/Long term unemployment
   Anti-social behaviour
   Educational problems

This systematic review was conducted by the research partner – European Strategies Consulting – a Romanian research company - in consultation with the other partners involved in the Network. The present document will detail only the review conducted on the Disaffected Youth.

B. Inclusion & Exclusion criteria

The following inclusion criteria were used for the selection of the relevant papers for this review:

1. papers produced and published in EU countries within the last 5 years (2009-2013). When necessary, papers published prior to this year, or in other areas (including the US), have been taken into consideration.
2. papers published in peer reviewed scientific journals have been given priority. For topics where peer-review papers were not available, unpublished reports or other 'grey literature' were accepted.
3. to look at the employability or/and employment for the mentioned disadvantaged groups.
4. to present results or impact on employability or employment of the mentioned disadvantaged groups. Papers describing reflections or critical comments regarding different initiatives were included but were not given priority.
5. to be in English but also in some other EU languages. If one report was available in many languages, the English version was preferred.

Reports based on evaluations conducted by the project/program staff were only taken into consideration when independent evaluations were not available for that particular group of vulnerable people.

Two large electronic databases were investigated – SAGE and Taylor and Francis – using different combinations between keywords like: 'employment', 'empowerment', 'disaffected youth', 'education' and 'after 2009'. At the end of this exercise 20 studied were identified as corresponding to the inclusion criteria.

Apart from the papers identified in the electronic databases, members of the learning networks suggested also websites and reports that were also included in this review. For more details about the review procedure, please see Annex.

Since this review is still work in progress, we would welcome any suggestions and literature on the topics discussed here. At the end of the each section a note has been included to inform the readers to what extent more literature is needed.

C. Disaffected youth. Social and policy context

The term 'disaffected youth' offers in the same time an explanation of the problem and a description of it. 'Disaffected' means disconnection from the mainstream social values and an alienation from the set of moral values that prescribe a desirable behaviour[1].

Indeed, in the context of the economic downturn, migration, changes in the structure of the labour market and other social and economic factors, youth unemployment rates are dramatically high in Europe. What is worrying is not only its annual value but the trend. For instance, in 2011 around 5.5 million young people were unemployed in EU countries, which means a rate of about 21.4%. In 2012, the youth unemployment rate was already 22% and rising due to the economic recession (Howley et al., 2013).

At the European level, the European Commission adopted the EU Youth Strategy that promotes a dialog between youth and policy makers in order to increase citizenship, foster social integration and ensure social inclusion. For 2010-2018, the Strategy has two overall objectives:

-       to provide more equal opportunities for young people in education and work,
-       to encourage young people to actively participate in society.

The Strategy covers eight fields of action:
-       education and training
-       employment and entrepreneurship
-       health and well being
-       participation
-       voluntary activities
-       social inclusion
-       youth and the world
-       creativity and culture
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In the area of education and training, the Strategy targets the current skills mismatch and the transition from education to employment. These objectives will be achieved through:

-       equal access to high quality education and training
-       develop youth work and other forms of non-formal learning opportunities
-       links between formal and non-formal education
-       improving transition between education and training and the job market
-       reducing early school leaving

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[1] Definition available at:
http://understandingsociety.blogspot.ro/2009/02/disaffected-youth.html

In the area of employment and entrepreneurship the EU and its members will act to:

- integrate concerns of the young people into employment strategies
- invest in providing skills employers are looking for
- develop career guidance and counselling services
- promote opportunities for youth to work and train abroad
- promote quality internships / apprenticeship
- improve childcare and shared parental responsibly
- encourage entrepreneurship in young people.

One of the EU initiatives that promote concrete steps towards reducing the youth unemployment is the Youth Opportunities Initiative. This initiative includes pilot actions on a Youth Guarantee and 'Your First EURES' job scheme. The Youth Guarantee ensures that all young people up to the age of 25 get a good quality, concrete offer within 4 months of them leaving the formal education or becoming unemployed. The offer should be for a job, apprenticeship, traineeship or continued education.

'Your First EURES' Job is a mobility scheme to help young Europeans find work in other EU countries. The scheme target young people between 18to 30 years old.

Other initiatives encourage access of youth to good quality training or apprenticeship.

C.1 Disaffected youth inclusion and empowerment

The concept of 'empowerment' is a rather broad one and can be defined depending on the concrete context. As a concept, empowerment has a long career: it was used in the 18th century in the field of medicine; it was used in the civil rights movement in the US in the 1960s; it was also used in the women's movement and so on (European Learning Network on Empowerment and Inclusion, 2010). According to Tengqvist and Milling (2006) the marginalised groups are often in the situation of not being able to affect their life or the surrounding society. Due to this experience, these groups tend to internalise experiences of being given low value. The key elements of empowerment are therefore the nature of power, its use and consequences and unjust society.

Empowerment is an important approach that involves strengthening marginalized groups in order for them to become change agents in a more inclusive society. All these elements are well summarised in the Gutierrez (1990) definition of empowerment:

> *'a process of increasing interpersonal or political power so that individuals can take action to improve their life situation' (149)*

One of the most well known EU programmes that dealt with empowerment is EQUAL Community Initiative, financed by the European Social Fund within the 2000-2006 programming period. One of the five pillars of the program was 'increasing employability' among disadvantaged groups. Under this pillar, two main field of actions were identified: facilitating access and return to the labour market for those who have difficulty of being integrated or re-integrated; and combating racism and xenophobia in relation to the labour market. Regarding the empowerment one of the conclusions of EQUAL was that it takes time for it to embed into the public policy and private practice and those who are expected to foster and support it themselves need help and guidance. However, EQUAL appears to have provided experiences of empowerment to small organizations and NGOs, many of them acting as representatives of target group (client's voice). At the micro level, the experience of empowerment can be measured as a direct involvement of the target groups in the decision-making process. EQUAL experts emphasised that an effective empowerment means not only involving the target groups into decision making but involving all partners in all phases and activities, including definition, management, implementation, adjustment and monitoring the projects.

In order for the empowerment principles to be incorporated at the institutional level, EQUAL experts suggested:

- the spread of good practices
- the application of systems for involving beneficiaries through discussion or problems, objectives and actions,
- the integration of target groups in the Thematic Networks[2].

At the national level, research had been conducted in some countries to look at how youth are encouraged to participate into the political or civic life. Villano and Bertocchi (2014) ran a content analysis of the European and national legislation and programs to see how Italy promotes young people's participation. They also conducted six in-depth interviews with Italian politicians and non-governmental representatives. The conclusion was that there are some structural difficulties for the young people to engage in political and civic activities. There is also a gap between the political discourse and an effective investment, which would recognise young people as a real resource. The situation is even worse for young immigrants.

Research at the individual level, emphasises how youth participation is a complex phenomenon placed at the intersection of aspirations, opportunities, attitudes, values, dispositions and so on. One of these studies, conducted by Simmons et al. (2013) in the North of England, based on the ethnographic design, demonstrates that even when young people are not in education, training or employment (NEET) they are actively searching for jobs they may

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[2] EQUAL Report available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal_consolidated/data/document/Lessons%20from%20Evaluation%20conference%202005.pdf

face significant barriers such as low level of demand for labour, poor quality work with de-motivating effects, lack of viable access to transport, lack of childcare support and so on. The authors found no evidence of the 'culture of poverty' and noted that all youngsters had the same aspirations as the other young people. As in other studies, youngsters were found not excluded but rather at the margins of the participation. This explains why their relatively durable aspirations related to work, family and other traditional signifiers of adulthood are the same as for the other young people in the society.

However, repeated negative experiences either in work or in training can have a de-motivating effect on young people. Experience with poor quality work and low-level training courses expose young people to experiences characterised by insecurity and exploitation. Continuous failure to secure employment of a reasonable quality together with potential barriers can lead to negative attitudes to employment. The authors end their paper on a rather positive note, suggesting that youngsters are not powerless and the state could do more to invite them to join the labour market: stimulation of the demand for labour of particular forms of work, regulating employer's practices related to paid and voluntary work, promote local initiatives, promote incentives for employers and young people, linking training with meaningful employment opportunities and so on are only a few examples.

One of the promising practices that promote empowerment among young people seems to be the sport. Indeed, sport is understood to develop life skills (e.g. self esteem, self-discipline), social knowledge, values and leadership qualities (Darnell, 2010). Furthermore, sport generates social capital for disaffected groups. By bridging and bonding communities, sport creates access to information, resources, economic opportunities, social network and so on(Hartmann and Kwauk, 2011). Sport has also an important powerful symbolic role in the community: sport generates public attention and a good context for participation and affirmation. In order to be useful, sport-based activities need to be much more than sport. Sport is only a recruitment and a motivational strategy. The developmental framework of the sport activity can be complemented with education, mentorship, skill training and so on. But sport-based interventions do not lead automatically to positive outcomes. They need to be self-consciously designed and directed towards some specific aims and have appropriate resources. They also need to be combined with other, non-sport programming and investment in order to reach some developmental goals (Hartmann and Kwauk, 2011).

Research in the US, also suggests that community and civic participation among youth can be also simulated through the involvement of youth into volunteer work (see for example Nenga, 2012). Arts-based activities may also provide young people with a voice in the community (see Batsleer, 2011). D'Ambrosi and Massoli (2012) make a strong case for the use of social media in developing social capital in youth and also in strengthening the civicness of youth.

But working with young people with a clear empowerment philosophy is not a straightforward endeavour. As suggested by Fitzsimons et al. (2011)

facilitating quality youth work based on the empowerment model, requires a number of professional skills in the youth workers such as: reflection skills, facilitation skills and so on. Furthermore, organisations working with young people which intend to be consistent with empowerment need to adapt their leadership, the structure and the culture of the organisation, models of decision-making and management of staff. A key element in this respect is the value alignment between empowerment and the organisational culture. By using the example of The Warren, a young's people community, Fitzsimons et al. (2011) illustrate how difficult this cultural shift within one organisation is.

Other set of studies explore how young people are influenced by the different state interventions. Deuchar (2010), for instance, warns that the new anti-social behaviour policies in Scotland create an atmosphere of oppression for youngsters. The young people interviewed by the author complained of a very high level of intense and unnecessary surveillance in their local community. Adding to that, the negative experience in relation to police creates for young people a belief that they live in a punitive and oppressive society. Being treated as 'second-class citizens', young people living in deprived urban communities tend to be heavily marginalised by the police or other segments of the state power and this leads to a deep feeling of 'abject citizenship' (Sharkey and Shields, 2008) that does not promote civic participation and trust in the state authority. On the contrary, these young people tend to turn towards their own groups that give them access to dignity and positive identity.

As for the impact of youth empowerment programs (YEPs), the research is quite inconclusive due mainly to the lack of rigorous research in this area. Morton and Montgomery (2013) assessed the state of evidence regarding the impact of these programs on self-efficacy, self-esteem and other social, emotional and behavioural outcomes among adolescents (ages 10-19) and identified only 3 studies out of 8789 citations that met the inclusive criteria. The inclusive criteria were for the studies to be based on at least quasi-experimental trials on community interventions that regularly involved youth in decision-making. The review conclusion was that no significant effects were found on self-efficacy. Some positive impact was recorded on social supports and connections, social skills and problem behaviour but these were inconsistent across studies.

To conclude this section, empowering young people to participate in the civic life of community and come closer to the labour market seems to be a promising practice. Involving youth in national and local debates could enhance their confidence and self-efficacy. However, this involvement should be genuine and supported with real investment in structures and opportunities that encourage direct youth participation. National and local level should work together based on the empowerment philosophy if negative experiences are to be avoided. Although strong research evidence is not there yet due to the lack of robust studies, there are good indications that youth involvement in defining, managing, implementing and monitoring social initiatives can generate positive personal and social outcomes, some of them directly related to employment.

C.2 Disaffected youth employment, education and training

Education and training has become crucial in a changing world where the nature of employment was transformed in an important number of European countries.

According to the European Commission, by 2020, 16 million more jobs in Europe will require high qualifications while the demand for law-skilled jobs will drop by 12 million (European Commission, 2010). In the UK, for instance, these structural changes impacted on the number of available jobs in different sectors of economy. The largest increase in employee jobs has been in banking, finances and insurance industry (from 2.7 million in June 1981 to 5.4 million in June 2006). Significant increases were also in education, health, public administration, distribution, hotels and restaurants. In contrast, the extraction and production industries (agriculture, fishing, energy, water, construction and manufacturing) showed a combined fall of 43% in the same period of time (Office for National Statistics, 2007).

This dramatic decline of the manual jobs and the rise of the knowledge-based jobs lead to an increased demand of graduate-level skills (or equivalent) (Farrall et al., 2010).

In the OECD countries, 16% of 15-29 years olds are not employed or in education. This proportion increased considerable in 2009 and 2010 compared with the pre-crisis levels. As anticipated above, in 2011 around 5.5 million young people were unemployed in EU countries, which means a rate of about 21.4%. In 2012, the youth unemployment rate was already 22% and rising due to the economical recession (Howley et al., 2013).

This structural context defines those with no proper education as 'unemployable'. If this under-education is combined with other vulnerabilities such as criminal history or mental health problems, the prospects of employment are rather slim. Furthermore, low levels of education correlates with numerous health related issues and risk behaviours, such as: drug use, crime and so on (Eiberg et al. 2014).

The European Commission has responded to these challenges through the Europe 2020 flagship initiative called Youth on the Move and the 2012-2013 Youth Opportunities Initiative. Both these documents aim at unleashing the potential of young people and call for a more concentrated action from the states authorities, social partners, employers etc. to tackle the youth unemployment.

Special provisions of these documents refer to pathways back to education and training and also to a better contact between education and employment. Other relevant documents of the EU on youth employment and education:
1. Youth Employment Initiative (YEI)

2. Council Recommendation on establishing the Youth Guarantee – 2013/C 120/01.
3. European Alliance for Apprenticeships

In order to monitor the youth situation in Europe and allow for European comparison, the European Commission has introduced new statistical indicators such as NEET rate.

In order to tackle this challenge European countries undertook a significant number of measures. Some of them played a more preventative role (such as measures to prevent early school leave) while other had a more reintegration value (measures to remove barriers, incentives for employers etc.).

In a recent report, Howley et al. (2013) evaluated the effectiveness of these measures in terms of outputs, outcomes and impact in nine European countries. One of the most important conclusions of this report was that due to the poor design and the lack of rigorous evaluations it is difficult to assess at the national or European level the impact of these measures on the youth unemployment rates. This difficulty is augmented by the influences of other factors such as the macroeconomic context.

Nevertheless, combining evidence from different evaluations, policy documents, interviews and so on, the authors concluded that youth employment measures were relatively successful.

Moreover, they formulated a comprehensive list of 'policy pointers' that seem useful in our evaluation:

1. Successful policy measures specify their target group and find innovative ways to reach them, for example by establishing a good reputation or creating a positive 'brand' for the measure or working with relevant community groups for hard-to-reach groups.
2. It is important to note that young people vary in their level of labour market readiness and policies have to cater for a range of minor to complex needs.
3. Policy delivery relies on appropriate personnel, who need to be trained and supported.
4. Young people should be set up on a long-term sustainable pathway, for example by providing them with necessary skills and stable employment, rather than low-quality quick fixes.
5. Successful policies offer good quality career advice and comprehensive holistic guidance.
6. Youth employment measures should focus on the client, not the provider, for example by setting up one-stop-shops for young people or by offering tailored, personalised advice by mentors.
7. Inter-agency collaboration and involvement of all stakeholders can be a cost-effective way to implement policies, when the specific roles and responsibilities of different actors are specified.
8. Measures that aim to increase the employability of young people should focus on labour market needs and ensure a buy-in of employers and their representatives.

9. Youth unemployment requires flexible responses, which have to be adapted to economic cycles, whereas social exclusion is a structural issue and has to be addressed consistently.
10. Robust monitoring and evaluation should be used to inform policymaking and development.

(Howley et al., 2013: 2-3)

Looking at different national policies and local or regional initiatives, the authors identified 25 measures divided into different categories:

1. Measures to prevent early school leave (address the risk factors)

   - Avoiding the accumulation of disadvantaged students in specific schools,
   - Providing additional support for schools in specific geographical areas ('area-based policies') – schools receiving 10-15 % more financial support for recruiting more teachers, more teachers assistants, less children in one class etc.
   - Alternative pedagogies – such as Learning Communities (Spain) where schools engage with the communities in promoting high expectations among young people together with university students, staff from local NGOs, parents etc.
   - Transition support programme – for those who have dropped out school or did not gain a place in an upper secondary school. The aim of this programme is to provide young people with alternative career path, vocational training, employment options, 'trying out' different courses etc.

2. Measures to reintegrate early school leavers (back into school, training or employment).

   - Alternative learning environment, job shadowing,
   - Practical and professional oriented courses,
   - 'Whole person' approach – vocational training, short work placements, psychological support, counselling, apprenticeship, and other support needed to prevent the 'yo-yo' effect[3].

3. Measures to facilitate the transition from school to work (to ease the move to the first post-education job).

   - 'Youth Guarantee' (or 'job guarantee' in Sweden)– personalised needs assessment, employment plan and other activation measures (e.g. training, information, guidance etc.) offered by public employment services (PES) within a very short period of time after registering.
   - 'One - stop - shop' services – to ensure a more coordinated approach to the school-to-work progression pathways. The principle of this approach is that all needs are covered in one location.

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[3] If the person s not ready to move to education, training or employment, he/she will take up a job or a study place but then dropping out and ending up unemployed again.

- 'Integration into society contract' (France) – personalized follow-up with an adviser, training activities, work placements, internship etc. offered on a contractual bases.
- Creating networks of training centres strongly committed to effectiveness and labour market demands.
- Improving self-employment opportunities – Spain, for instance, allows young people to receive 80% of their total unemployment benefit entitlement in one single payment in order to start a new business.
- Exceptions from social security contributions are offered to self-employed and companies that hire young or long term unemployed people.

4. Measures to foster employability among young people (to promote skills, attitudes and qualities that enable youth to get a job, stay in that job and progress further in work).

- apprenticeship contracts – receiving 'hand-on', practical experience while in education.
- work based training schemes.
- bonuses for the companies that take apprentices and sanctions for the large companies that do not train a number of apprentices that is proportional to the size of their workforce.
- combination between on and off-job training with formal training – development of the occupational soft skills such as: self discipline, ability to concentrate and complete tasks etc.
- 'supra-company apprenticeship' – available for those who are not able to find apprenticeship on their own. Accredited providers offer apprenticeship together with training and counselling.

5. Measures to remove barriers to employment (especially for those with disability, learning difficulties, language issues etc.).

- alternative training, work based training.
- incentives for employers to recruit from 'hard-to-help' groups (e.g. 'Chances Card' - Finland).
-direct wage subsidies to employers, reduced social security contributions or tax payments.

As the authors emphasised several times, the early school leaver population is both diverse and dynamic and therefore 'individualised, tailor-made pathways back into education and training are at heart of most reintegration policies' (15). It is only after they are prepared and equipped with necessary skills and qualifications when they can move towards an active and productive adulthood and employment.

Some of these measures were measured in different countries using different methodologies.

The **Youth Guarantee** scheme was evaluated by Eurofound (2012) in Finland and Sweden. In Sweden the Youth Guarantee (En jobbgaranti for

ungdommar) was introduced in 2007 while in Finland (NuortenYhteiskuntatakk) the scheme was introduced in 2005 and revised in 2010. Although the schemes are not identical, they share the same aim: to reduce the time young people spend in unemployment and inactivity. In Sweden, the service is provided by the public employment service (PES) that provides the young person with a personalised needs assessment and an employment plan, followed by a guarantee. This guarantee can be with a job or a study opportunity or some other activation measures. In both states, the program obliges PES to provide these services within three months from registration. Independent evaluations found this service very successful even during the crisis years. In Finland, for instance, during the crisis the workload of many PES become almost unimaginable with the number of customers per adviser increased to 700. With the help of a budget increase in 2010 the situation improved and PESs in Finland were able to recruit more staff and create more training and other support services for young jobseekers. However, it seems that youth guarantee is more effective for young people who are work-ready and therefore tend to focus more on the new entrants on the job market than on the long-term unemployed. The authors also record as weaknesses of the scheme: it is focused on short-term solutions and is not addressing the structural problems of young people and the success is too dependent of other institutions and the labour market situation. However, as mentioned above the scheme seemed to work very well in these two countries even in the crisis time.

Using an experimental design, the Institute for Labour Market Policy Evaluation (2011) evaluated the **job guarantee** (as youth guarantee is called in Sweden) in Sweden and concluded that 24 year olds participating in the scheme found a job quicker than a comparable group registered with regular services. However, the results did not sustain for a long time. The probability of participants to be unemployed within one year proved to be the same for both groups. It can be concluded that this measure acts as a quick fix solution and does not address the structural concerns of the young people (e.g. lack of skills, lack of qualification etc.).

Most of **the school dropout** interventions fall into one or more of the following categories: school or class restructuring (e.g. creating smaller classrooms, lower student/teacher ratio, individualized program etc.), vocational training (e.g. work-related counselling, career exploration internship, paid employment for students), supplemental academic services (e.g. tutoring, homework assistance, remedial education etc.) or teenage pregnancy and parenthood. The last sort of services may include beside day care centers interventions like welfare payment, incentives and so on aiming at supporting young mother stay engaged with education.

These services were assessed in the US by Wilson et al. (2011) in a very comprehensive systematic review (based on 548 studies that use quasi-experimental or experimental design). The authors conclusions were that:

> 'Overall, results indicated that most school- and community-based programs were effective in decreasing school dropout.

Given the minimal variation in effects across program types, the main conclusion from this review is that dropout prevention and intervention programs, regardless of type, will likely be effective **if they are implemented well** and **are appropriate for the local environment**. We recommend that policy makers and practitioners choosing dropout prevention programs consider the cost-effectiveness of programs, and choose those that **fit best with local needs** as well as **implementer abilities and resources**.' (10)

In 2012, Ecorys was commissioned by the European Commission to undertake a study on the lessons learnt from **second chance education**. There is no one second chance education model but a number of possibilities that are used creatively in different countries based on principles such as: small group of learners, flexible timetable, diverse activities (sport, cultural and life skills etc.), flexible curricula and so on.

The methodology of the study was a complex one combining: quantitative data analysis, literature review, interviews, fact-finding visits and workshops with practitioners and high-level experts.

The conclusion of the authors was that this measure of reducing early school leaving is effective if a number of conditions are met:

- the second chance schemes emphasise the distinctiveness from the mainstream school – avoiding the negative associations with the initial education but ensuring in the same time the learning opportunities in a credible way (e.g. gaining a formal qualification),
- identify and engage with those who left the school system via local community and social networks – use of 'softy' approach for contacting the young people (via friends, family members, telephone etc.)
- place an obligation on the local authorities to ensure that young people are engaged in education or training.
- Persistence and building up trust are valued as essential qualities[4].

Using an ad-hoc survey of the beneficiaries, ISFOL (2011) evaluated the impact of **apprenticeship scheme** in Italy. It found that 70.9% of the apprentices were still employed with the same company within two years after the competition of the training programme and 21% were employed elsewhere. Stakeholder also reported a high level of satisfaction and confidence regarding its impact on employment.

The '**Supra-company apprenticeship'** was evaluated in Austria (Bergmann and Schelepa, 2011) and found quite effective: 58% of those completing the programme in 2010 were working after three months and 63% after 12 months. However, the evaluation identified also relatively high percentage of

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[4] Report available at: http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/2014/20140410-study-second-chance-education_en.htm

dropout – 23%. Some of them leave for employment or regular company-based apprenticeship but other had no alternative destination. For them the prospects were quite negative: 2/3 of them were still unemployed after 12 months. Although these results may seem only partially positive, we should not forget that this scheme was available for the hard-to-reach people.

'**Chances card'** was evaluated in Finland during the economic crisis and found effective (Pitkanen et al., 2012; Terava, 2011). About 22% of the recipients were able to get a job with the Chances Card. However, not all young people were using the card when looking for a job. 36% of those who used the card were successful at finding a job. The card was evaluated also against the national wage subsidy scheme and found it more effective. Only 21% of the beneficiaries of the national wage subsidy scheme were still in employment 12 month after completing the placement.

Although it was not always possible to evaluate the outcomes or the impact of all these measures, in general evidence suggests that they are successful. However, it is important to note that not all the measures are effective with all the young people. Some measures seem to be more effective with those with low levels of qualifications. Some others seem to work better with those with high levels of qualifications, with skills and motivation.

Need of assistance to gather more literature - Moderate

D. Conclusion

As illustrated above, research evidence on youth employment, education and training is more generous in quality and quantity than on other employment related themes. More robust and complex methodologies are employed when measuring the impact of different employment or educational measures. Some studies rely on longitudinal approach whereby the subjects were followed from the beginning of the intervention until a short period after the intervention. These studies were able to capture the short-term impact of the measures on the target population but were not able to establish a convincing correlation between the intervention and the impact. It may be possible that the impact could have appeared due to some other combination of factors.

To overcome this methodological limit, some other studies used experimental or quasi-experimental methodologies in association with other qualitative methods. In their case, the conclusions were more solid and convincing. However, most of these studies were conducted in one single location. As we have noted several times above, most of the interventions are very context-depended; dependent on the labour market demand, dependent on the structure of the labour market etc. It may be useful in the future to conduct more comparative studies based on complex methodologies but in different countries to clarify furthermore the direction and the impact of the context in relation to these measures.

Although more research needs to be conducted in these two areas, some conclusions can be safely drawn based on the existent evidence. One of the most important conclusions is that, in spite of the fact that we approached the two subjects separately; in policy and practice they should be strongly inter-related. Employment or educational interventions can work better when they are designed and implemented based on the empowerment philosophy.

Young people should be more involved in designing, implementing and monitoring interventions that target youth. Moreover, the state national and local authorities should support this involvement with concrete and real investments and clear and accessible mechanisms that facilitate youth participation. Obviously, this policy shift requires fundamental changes in the organizational culture of the organisations and institutions dealing youth education and employment. Young people also need to be more supported to gain confidence and express their views in these matters. One first step in this direction is to avoid an accumulation of negative experiences among youth in the area of education, employment and the community development.

As noted in the sections above, other learning points can be mentioned regarding different measures, such as: youth guarantee, apprenticeship, second chance education and so on. Evidence shows that they are effective at least on a short term. It is not sure yet if they work on a long run. It may be that they need to build on one other in supporting youth to grow from where they are to higher levels of life and labour related skills. In this respect, the principles of personalised intervention and the 'whole person' approach are of particular importance. States authorities should stay closely involved in these interventions by providing an inclusive legislation that removes employment barriers and provide incentives and clear and inclusive labour regulations. Since most of the interventions should fit into the local circumstances, local authorities should be invited to play a more active role in engaging and promoting youth education, training and employment.

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Annex

Data bases	Key words	Results	Relevant results
SAGE	'Disaffected youth' + 'after 2009'	38	2
	'Disaffected youth' + 'empowerment' + 'after 2009'	8	2
	'Youth' + 'employment '+ 'empowerment' + 'after 2009'	1234	1
	'Disaffected youth' + 'education' +'after 2009'	31	3
Taylor and Francis	'Disaffected youth' + 'empowerment' + 'after 2009'	279	4
	'Disaffected youth' + 'employment' + 'after 2009'	686	5
	'Disaffected youth' + 'education' + 'after 2009'	831	3